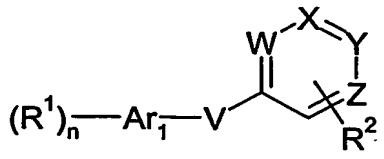
CLAIMS

1. A compound of formula (I):



(I)

wherein

V represents NR^5, O, S, SO or $S(O)_2$;

W and X each independently represent CH or N;

Y represents N, CH or C-Ar_2, with the proviso that at least one, but no more than two, of W, X and Y are N;

Z represents CH or C-Ar_2, with the proviso that when Y is N or CH then Z is C-Ar_2, and with the further proviso that when Y is C-Ar_2 then Z is CH;

Ar_1 represents a fused 9 or 10 membered heterobicyclic ring system containing one, two, three or four heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen and sulfur, wherein at least one of the rings in said ring system is aromatic;

Ar_2 represents an aromatic ring selected from phenyl, pyridyl, pyridazinyl, pyrimidinyl and pyrazinyl; which aromatic ring is optionally fused to a phenyl ring, a five-membered heteroaromatic ring containing 1, 2, 3 or 4 heteroatoms selected from O, N and S at most 1 heteroatom being O or S, or a six-membered heteroaromatic ring containing 1, 2 or 3 N atoms; which aromatic ring is unsubstituted or substituted by one, two or three groups selected from halogen, hydroxy, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl, C_{2-6}alkynyl, phenylC_{1-2}alkoxy, haloC_{1-6}alkyl, hydroxyC_{1-6}alkyl, C_{1-6}alkoxy, haloC_{1-6}alkoxy, hydroxyC_{1-6}alkoxy, C_{3-7}cycloalkyl, C_{3-7}cycloalkoxy, C_{3-5}cycloalkylC_{1-4}alkyl, cyano, nitro, SR^6, SOR^6, SO_2R^6, COR^6, NR^3COR^6, $CONR^3R^4$, $NR^3SO_2R^6$, $SO_2NR^3R^4$, -$(CH_2)_m$carboxy, esterified -$(CH_2)_m$carboxy, -$(CH_2)_mNR^3R^4$, phenyl, naphthyl, a five-membered heteroaromatic ring containing 1, 2, 3 or 4 heteroatoms selected from O, N and S at most 1 heteroatom being O or S and a six-membered heteroaromatic ring containing 1, 2or 3 N atoms; where two C_{1-6}alkoxy groups are on adjacent atoms they may, together with the atoms to which they are attached, form a 5- or 6-membered partially saturated ring;

R^1 represents halogen, hydroxy, oxo, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl, C_{2-6}alkynyl, haloC_{1-6}alkyl, hydroxyC_{1-6}alkyl, C_{1-6}alkoxy, haloC_{1-6}alkoxy, hydroxyC_{1-6}alkoxy, C_{3-7}cycloalkyl, C_{3-}

$_{7}$cycloalkoxy, C_{3-5}cycloalkylC_{1-4}alkyl, cyano, nitro, SR^6, SOR^6, SO_2R^6, COR^6, NR^3COR^6, $CONR^3R^4$, $NR^3SO_2R^6$, $SO_2NR^3R^4$, -$(CH_2)_m$carboxy, esterified -$(CH_2)_m$carboxy or -$(CH_2)_mNR^3R^4$;

R^2 represents hydrogen, halogen, hydroxy, C_{1-6}alkyl, haloC_{1-6}alkyl, C_{3-7}cycloalkyl, C_{1-6}alkoxy, haloC_{1-6}alkoxy, unsubstituted phenyl or phenyl substituted with one or two groups selected from halogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, haloC_{1-6}alkyl, C_{3-7}cycloalkyl, C_{1-6}alkoxy or haloC_{1-6}alkoxy;

R^3 and R^4 are each independently hydrogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl, C_{2-6}alkynyl, C_{3-7}cycloalkyl or fluoroC_{1-6}alkyl;

or R^3 and R^4 and the nitrogen atom to which they are attached together form a heteroaliphatic ring of 4 to 7 ring atoms, optionally substituted by one or two groups selected from hydroxy or C_{1-4}alkoxy, which ring may optionally contain as one of the said ring atoms an oxygen or a sulfur atom, S(O), $S(O)_2$, or NR^5;

R^5 represents hydrogen, C_{1-4}alkyl, hydroxyC_{1-4}alkyl or C_{1-4}alkoxyC_{1-4}alkyl;

R^6 represents hydrogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, fluoroC_{1-6}alkyl, C_{3-7}cycloalkyl, unsubstituted phenyl, or phenyl substituted with one or two groups selected from halogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, haloC_{1-6}alkyl, C_{3-7}cycloalkyl, C_{1-6}alkoxy or haloC_{1-6}alkoxy;

m is either zero or an integer from 1 to 4;

n is either zero or an integer from 1 to 3;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt, N-oxide or a prodrug thereof.

2. A compound according to claim 1 in which R^1 is halogen, C_{1-4}alkyl or fluoroC_{1-4}alkyl.

3. A compound according to claim 1 or 2 in which n is one or two.

4. A compound according to claim 1, 2 or 3 in which R^2 is hydrogen, halogen, C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy or phenyl substituted by C_{1-4}alkyl or fluoroC_{1-4}alkyl.

5. A compound according to any preceding claim in which =W-X=Y- represents =N-CH=CH-, =N-N=CH-, =N-CH=N- or =N-N=C(Ar_2)-.

6. A compound according to any preceding claim in which Ar_1 represents a heterobicyclic ring system selected from isoquinoline, indazole, triazolopyridine, cinnoline, benzothiazole, imidazopyridine, quinoline, tetrahydroisoquinoline or dihydroisoquinoline.

7. A compound according to any preceding claim in which Ar_2 is phenyl or pyridyl which are optionally fused to a phenyl, imidazolyl or thienyl ring, and are unsubstituted or

substituted by one to three groups independently selected from halogen, cyano, C_{1-4}alkyl, fluoroC_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, fluoroC_{1-4}alkoxy, phenylC_{1-2}alkoxy, piperidine optionally substituted by oxygen, COR^6 where R^6 is hydrogen or C_{1-4}alkyl, pyrazole, C_{1-4}alkylcarbonyl, carboxy, C_{1-6}alkylsulphonyl, nitro, phenyl, C_{1-4}alkylthio, hydroxy and -O-CH_2-O-.

8. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of formula (I) according to any preceding claim, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or N-oxide thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

9. A compound of formula (I) according to any one of claims 1 to 7, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or N-oxide thereof, for use in a method of treatment of the human or animal body by therapy.

10. Use of a compound of formula (I) according to any one of claims 1 to 7, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or N-oxide thereof, for use in the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment or prevention of a disease or condition in which pain and/or inflammation predominates.

11. A method for the treatment or prevention of a disease or condition in which pain and/or inflammation predominates, which method comprises administration to a patient in need thereof of an effective amount of a compound of formula (I) according to claim 1, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or N-oxide thereof.